



Edwin William Stephan Jr.

December 15, 1931 - November 8, 2019

STEPHAN, EDWIN W. Founder of Royal Caribbean Cruise Line and Founding Father of the modern-day cruise industry, passed away surrounded by his loved ones on Friday, November 8th, 2019. An outstanding philanthropist, humanitarian, war hero and industry pioneer, Stephan was a man with incredible vision whose forward thinking changed the cruise industry forever. Stephan was born on December 15th, 1931 in Madison, Wisconsin; he later attended the University of Wisconsin. He left his studies to serve his country in the Korean War, where he was awarded two Bronze Stars for his exemplary service as a Lieutenant in Radar and Guided Missiles and Field Artillery. Following his service, he moved to Miami and began his career in the service industry as a bell captain at the Casablanca Hotel and later ran the Biscayne Terrace Hotel downtown. By the end of 1962, Stephan joined the cruise industry when Yarmouth Steamship Company recruited him for his renowned hospitality experience. Stephan left hotels ashore and began his first job in the cruise industry as the line's general manager. He would later leave the company and become Co-Founder and President of Commodore Cruise Line from 1962 to 1967. During this time, he began constructing his vision for Royal Caribbean Cruise Line, a modernized cruise company with ships built specifically for warm-weather sailing. Stephan was firm in his conviction that a fleet of purpose-built passenger ships, which combined the maritime technology, management and seamanship of Norway with American-style hotel operations, was the ideal concept for Caribbean success. He designed his new ships with an emphasis on safety and with a modern yacht look. Stephan's marketing brainchild, the "Viking Crown," a cocktail lounge that sits high atop every Royal Caribbean vessel, is arguably the Line's featured trademark. Safety and passenger satisfaction were placed highest on his priority list. Always humble, in regards to his accomplishments, Stephan stated, "Although I am not much for legacy, I still find it rewarding that this line will be around for a long time." After founding Royal Caribbean Cruise Line, Stephan served for 35 years in various executive positions, including Chief Executive Officer, President, and Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors. He was honored numerous times for setting the highest standards for the cruise industry, including the 2009 Hall of Fame Award by CLIA (Cruise Lines International Association, Inc.), Maritime Person of the Year amongst others. Stephan continued to counsel colleagues in the cruise industry long after his retirement.

Stephan was a man who always put his family and others first. He was a true renaissance man with a passion for philosophy, astronomy, poetry and nature. Stephan lived in Miami with his beloved wife Helen, of 33 years, who is Godmother of the ship, Vision of the Seas. He is father to four grown children, Samantha, Michael, Gary and Kristina, and grandfather to Olivia, William and Devin. He is survived by a very large and loving family. A family only service will be held to honor Ed's memory. In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations in memory of Edwin Stephan to be made to Mount Sinai Miami Medical Center Foundation in honor of his physician, Eugene J. Sayfie M.D. By Mail: 4300 Alton Road, Ascher Building #100, Miami Beach, Florida 33140.

Cemetery

Van Orsdel Crematory

3333 NE 2nd Avenue

Miami, FL,